AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

On page 8, please amend the paragraph beginning on line [0037] as follows:

FIG. 1 illustrates one example of an implantable medical device in the form of a stent 10. Although the present invention will be described with reference to a stent, the invention can also be useful as other types of drug delivery implants including subcutaneous implants, and embolization devices, implants for delivery of chemotherapeutic agents.

On page 8, please amend the paragraph beginning on line [0039] as follows:

The implantable medical devices of the present invention are configured to release at least one therapeutic agent from a matrix affixed to the implantable body. The matrix is formed such that the concentration of the therapeutic agent in the matrix varies as a gradient relative to a surface of the matrix affixed to the implantable body. The [dposition] deposition of a coating on a surface, such as by dipping or spraying may result in the phenomenon know as blooming by which the drug migrates to the surface resulting in increased concentration at the matrix surface. However, know coating methods do not achieve configurations in which a concentration in an area adjacent the matrix surface is less than a concentration of the drug at another part of the matrix. The present invention provides methods and devices by which an implantable medical device [ca] can be designed to achieve a particular release profile by providing a concentration gradient of drug in a homogeneous polymer matrix in which the concentration gradient is provided other than by the phenomenon of blooming.

On page 10, please amend the paragraph beginning on line [0046] as follows:

As shown in FIG. 4, the change in agent concentration in the matrix is a continuous function of the position relative to the matrix surfaces. As shown in FIG. 5, the release kinetics of the system of FIGS. 3 and 4 can be essentially linear (essentially constant release rate over time)

after an initial release. Such substantially linear release profiles are described in further detail in U.S. Patent Application Serial No. [_____] 10/777,881 [(Attorney Docket No. 032304-107)] filed on [even date herewith] February 11, 2004 which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.